The New York Times Matthew L. Wald December 7, 2010

WASHINGTON — Federal inspectors charged with ensuring the safety of offshore oil drilling are overwhelmed, insufficiently trained, work without official procedures for some of their most crucial decisions and sometimes have insufficient support from their supervisors for resisting industry influence, according to a report released Tuesday by the Interior Department's inspector general.

The report, which examined the practices of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, echoes the findings of an earlier investigation by the department released in September, and is based on much of the same raw material. But the new report offers additional recommendations and provides new details of the problems in the agency, which until last spring was called the Minerals Management Service.

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